

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A magnetic recording medium, comprising
a lower non-magnetic layer containing at least a non-magnetic powder and a binder
resin on one surface of a non-magnetic support,
an upper magnetic layer containing at least a ferromagnetic powder and a binder resin
on the lower non-magnetic layer, and
a back coat layer on the other surface of the non-magnetic support, wherein
the thickness of the upper magnetic layer is within the range from 0.03 to 0.30 μm ,
the AFM surface roughness Ra of the upper magnetic layer is 6 nm or less, and
the number of concavities with a depth of 30 nm or greater in the surface of the upper
magnetic layer is 5 per 1 cm^2 of surface area or less, and

the magnetic recording medium is formed by a process comprising:

a step A of forming a lower non-magnetic layer by applying a non-magnetic
layer coating containing at least a non-magnetic powder and a binder resin onto one surface
of a non-magnetic support and subsequently drying and curing the non-magnetic layer
coating;

a step B of forming an upper magnetic layer by applying a magnetic layer
coating containing at least a ferromagnetic powder and a binder resin onto the lower non-
magnetic layer and subsequently drying the magnetic layer coating;

a step C of forming a back coat layer by applying a back coat layer coating
onto another surface of the non-magnetic support and subsequently drying the back coat layer
coating; and

a step D of performing calendering following completion of both the step A
and the step C.

Claim 2 (Original): The magnetic recording medium according to claim 1, wherein the average major axis length of the ferromagnetic powder is 0.1 μm or less.

Claim 3 (Original): The magnetic recording medium according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the medium is used in a recording and reproducing system in which the minimum recording wavelength is 0.6 μm or shorter.

Claim 4 (Canceled)